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To

Instructional Quality Commission,
Department of Education

SUBJECT:

References Included; Request to REJECT CHSSP's Comment 2459 and KEEP ORIGINAL TEXT

I have been carefully observing the Framework refinement process over last several month. I am very concerned with CHSSP's recognition of continued attempts of South Asian groups to divide Hinduism in to pieces.

My inputs is for following specific comment # 2459 recommended by CHSSP on 14th March.
Page 212, lines 819-821:

Current text: *"Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era named for the Vedas, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through a complex oral tradition."*

South Asian faculty's suggested change: *"Ancient South Asia experienced a Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), named for the Vedas which were composed in Sanskrit. While Sanskrit texts, both religious and secular, continued to be produced in subsequent centuries, texts in Old Tamil also began to appear around 300 BCE, and Tamil literary production flourished during the Sangam period in South India in following centuries. Sanskrit and Tamil texts passed on for generations through a complex oral tradition."*

I understand that the justification that South Asian groups given on 24-FEB-16 provide is as follows: *"There is a problem in taking ancient South Asia to be coterminous with the Vedas, with Sanskrit, and with Hinduism. This excludes the great corpus of Sanskrit literary, scientific, philosophical and inscriptional texts and the entire Sangam tradition of Tamil literature, which again cannot be reduced to Hinduism. We recommend changing this sentence, "Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era named for the Vedas, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through a complex oral tradition.""*

I ask you to REJECT their suggestion based on the following page

1. The South Asian group suggests that the Sangam tradition was independent of the Vedas and Hinduism. However, it was not an independently developed religion but one that derived its core beliefs from Hinduism. It was also not considered separate and distinct from Hinduism but yet another sub-tradition like many others that have come before it and many others that have come after it
2. The great corpus of Sanskrit literary, scientific, philosophical and inscriptional texts being referred to are also considered a part of Hinduism – so, again there is an artificial divide between different streams of Hindu thought.
3. Their entire argument is based on a poor understanding of Hinduism and its many streams of thought.
4. This is an attempt to divide Hinduism into many components in such a manner that has no relation with reality.
5. These suggestions not only attempt to divide Hindus, but will deprive the Hindu children of pride in their heritage, as Hindus. They will force children to feel insecure in their Hindu religious belief, and imbibe the seeds of division within Hinduism. These changes will violate the basic tenet of enabling students to become aware and accepting of religious diversity in a fair manner.